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SPEECH

DELIVERED BY

JOHN CHARLTON, M.P.,

ON THE

GOVERNMENT LAND POLICY IN THE NORTH-WEST.

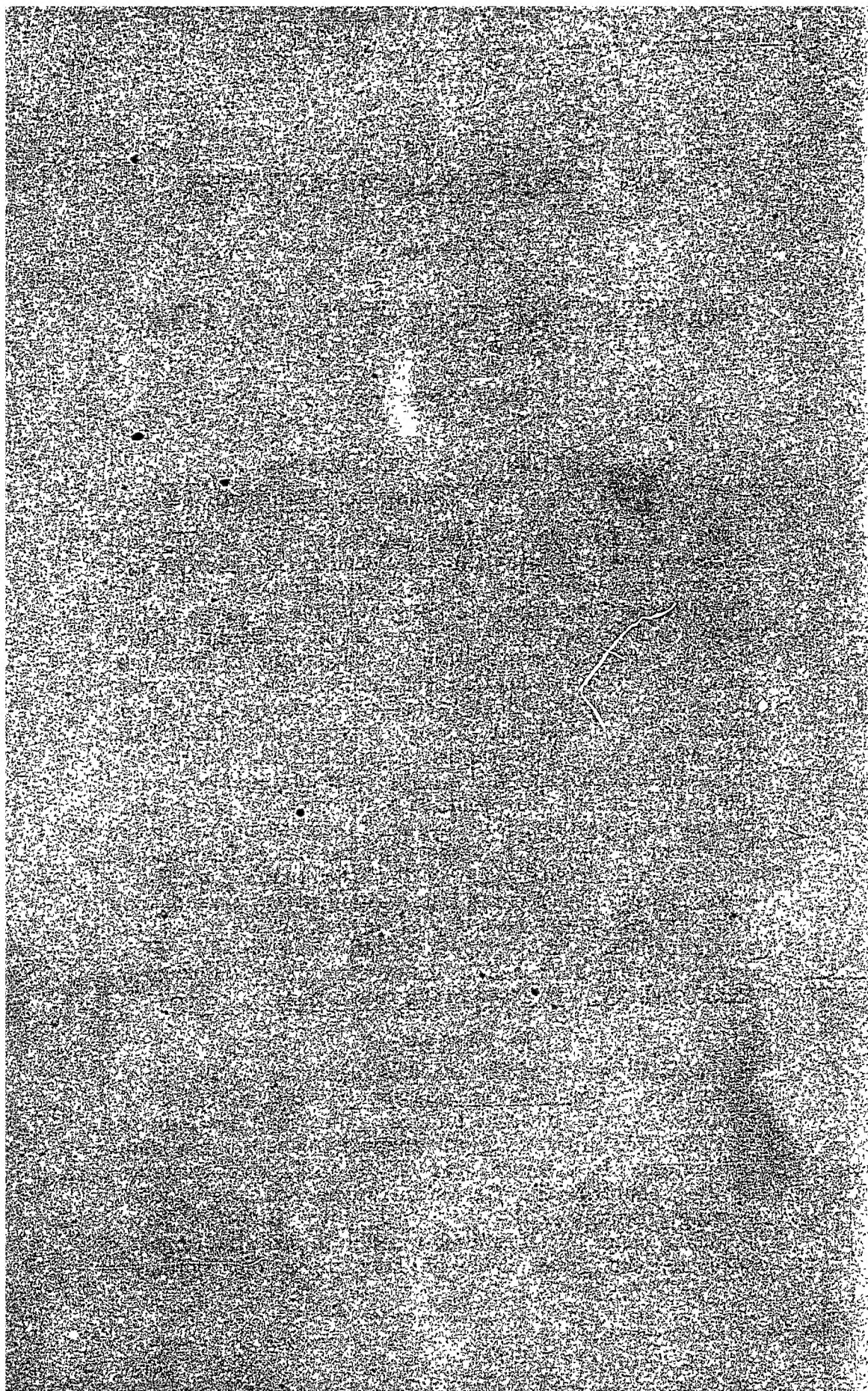
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HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1882.

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MR. CHARLTON'S SPEECH

ON THE

GOVERNMENT LAND POLICY IN THE NORTH-WEST.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

WEDNESDAY, 12th April, 1882.

Mr. CHARLTON. Before you leave the Chair, Mr. Speaker, I wish to submit to the House a resolution on the Government land policy in the North-West. I may say that I regret that circumstances compel me to move in the way I am about to do to-day. At an early date in the Session, returns were called for with reference to the land question. The information sought in these returns was necessary to an intelligent discussion of the question I am about to lay before the House. It was found it would be impossible to get these returns in full, and an attempt was then made to get the information in a summarized form. This information was promised from time to time, and fragmentary portions of it have been received, but owing to the delay in receiving it, the time has passed for putting a notice on the notice paper in the usual manner, and proceeding to the discussion of this question on that motion, and I am reduced to the necessity of moving, as I do to-day, in amendment to a motion for Committee of Supply. The question under discussion is one of very great importance to this country. We have in the North-West

A VAST REGION,

the capabilities of which are just beginning to be fairly understood. We have in that country, Sir, a region of probably seven or eight hundred miles long by four or five hundred miles in width adapted for settlement and cultivation. It embraces two of the great river systems of this country, the Mackenzie River and the system flowing through Lake Winnipeg into Hudson's Bay. It has a chain of lakes almost equal in size and importance to the great chain of lakes upon our borders.

between us and the United States. It is a country, Sir, which, as we become more intimately acquainted with its resources rises in our estimation. Its value is much greater than was supposed some years ago. As to the question of what population that country will support, I presume, from recent investigations, that we are justified in supposing the North-West will maintain a population of 25,000,000. If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, the bearing of the management of that territory upon the question of our national development, upon the question of the ultimate power and position this country will obtain, is one of very great importance as compared with other public questions of the day. It overshadows in importance the question whether we have, by our Trade Policy, succeeded in adding a few thousand operatives to our population, whether we have added a few cotton mills to our industries, or whether our people pay 3, 5 or 10 per cent. more taxes than they did upon the various wares they buy. Of this country we may well say with the poet, Whittier:

"The rudiments of empire here are plastic yet and warm
And the fragments of a mighty State are rounding into form."

BEST MODE OF DEVELOPMENT.

Well, Sir, the development of this country must be brought about, not by speculative movements, not by speculations in corner lots, or in town sites or in land even, but it must be brought about by the labors of the actual tiller of the soil. The country lying in its present state, a wilderness, is not an element of strength, not a source of power to Canada, and it can only become an element of strength, a source of power, when its soil is brought under cultivation, and that can only be done by the labor of the husbandman. Consequently, I hold that the interests of the settler, of the class that are to till the soil of the North-West, should be, in the estimation of the Government, paramount in importance to all other interests in treating this matter. The speculator will take care of himself. It is not necessary that the Government should look after the interests of the speculator or pay very great regard to his interests, but it is necessary to look after the interests of the settler. The operation of the speculator in many cases is not good for the country. At the present moment, I believe the speculative movement in the North-West is a source of danger, and at the best, Sir, the profits of the speculator in lands causes a loss to the yeoman. If the speculator invests in lands and sells at an advance to the settler, whatever the speculator may gain, that class who should be the first in the consideration of the

Government and whose interests the Government should look after very carefully, will lose to that extent. My hon. friend the First Minister spoke of the state of things in the North-West as a "land craze." I think he very justly characterized the present movement.

THE SPECULATIVE MOVEMENT

has reached very great development, and there is danger of its resulting in a mania similar to the South Sea mania, or the mania of speculation which brought about the prostration of credit in the United States in 1837. The indications now existing all point to such a danger. We have the city of Winnipeg filled with a horde of speculators; we have town sites advertised for sale in all parts of Manitoba and the North-West; we have anxious and feverish activity in those speculative ventures with fancy prices not based upon intrinsic value; and in all these the careful observer sees danger. It is in many respects like the land speculation in the United States, and it would, perhaps, be well to carefully state the facts in connection with that movement. In 1835 it commenced. The average sale of public lands each year, from 1796 to 1881, has been \$2,400,000, but the speculative movement in 1835 ran the sales of that year up to \$14,757,000. In 1836, the land sales amounted to \$24,877,000. The East was flooded with lithographed maps of sites, of towns and of cities to be built at such places as the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi, and the junction of the Missouri and Mississippi, and of various streams of the West. Almost every place that could be pointed out on the map as a good geographical point was marked off as a town site, and town lots were sold even in swampy places where no building was then, and where no building has ever been. These sales amounted to enormous sums of money, and loans were actually made in the east upon the title to places of this character. For instance the site of the present city of Milwaukee, then a wilderness, was sold by its owner for a sum of money which he lost in less than three months in speculating in lands in the city which then had no existence.

A NOTE OF WARNING.

If we look the case carefully over I think we will find that the circumstances in the United States, and those in this country at this time, present the same features, and I have very great apprehensions that the result will be here as the result there was, a

serious collapse of public and private credit, and the infliction of loss and injury upon the country. The effects already, of the removal of vast amounts of capital from Ontario to the North-West are being sensibly felt, and they will be more seriously felt in the course of a few months. The effects too of the migration of thousands and tens of thousands of the best class of the population of Ontario to the North-West are being sensibly felt. The value of property in the Province of Ontario is being depreciated, farms are being forced upon the market, causing a decline in prices, and there is no doubt that what will be a gain to Manitoba in this respect will be a loss to the other Provinces. I presume the Government will be disposed to claim that this speculative rush to the North-West is an indication of great prosperity, and that it is also an indication of wisdom on the part of the Government in the policy they have adopted with reference to this matter. I hold, on the contrary, that this high speculation, which threatens a speedy collapse, is largely promoted and fostered by the policy the Government have adopted, and that that policy will ultimately prove to have been most pernicious in the interest of the Dominion of Canada. The Government—and they will learn the truth of the assertion I am about to make—should avoid adopting a policy calculated to facilitate and promote the schemes and aims of the speculating class to the detriment of the honest and hardy yeomanry of this country. The aim of the Government should be not to secure large speculative sales of land, but to secure for

THE HARDY SONS OF TOIL

these wild lands, on which they will enter and commence cultivation. Its aim should be to foster and promote the interests of this country and let the speculators take care of themselves, and carefully hold themselves aloof from the promotion of all speculative movements. If this should be the policy of the Government, it then becomes a serious question for the Government to determine what shall be the degree of liberality that they shall exercise toward the settler in the inducements offered to him in order to get him to emigrate to the North-West. This question should be looked at from two stand-points. It should be looked at from the stand-point of what in itself *per se* is right and proper in the matter; and if the policy which the Government believes to be a just policy is calculated to secure settlement if no other obstacle is in the way. The next thing for the Government to consider is whether there is any competitor in the market seeking

for emigration to settle its new lands, or if it is offering better terms than we are offering. The fact will confront the Government at this stage that there is a competitor for emigrants from Europe for its great waste of unoccupied lands, desiring to secure settlers upon these lands and pushing westward its settlements which has already reached far beyond the Mississippi. The Government will next enquire what are the inducements which this competing Government offers, and if the Government of Canada wishes to be a successful competitor reason will teach them at a glance that it will be at least necessary that they will offer equal inducements to those, and probably even greater, because the United States territory is more accessible. I hold that our policy hitherto has not been of such a character as to secure a large amount of immigration, because it has not been as liberal in its provisions as

THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES.

When the United States Census was taken early in 1880—almost two years ago—the Canadian population of the State of Minnesota was 29,631, and that of the Territory of Dakota was 10,678, or a total Canadian population in that State and Territory of 40,309. If we add to this the number of those of English, Scotch and Irish nativity who had emigrated from Canada to these States, I have no doubt that the population drawn from Canada would exceed 50,000 souls. One year later our own Census was taken, and that Census gives a population in Manitoba of 65,000. I presume to say that one year later the Canadian population of Dakota and Minnesota was at least equal to the total population of the Province of Manitoba. This shows, I think, conclusively that the United States had offered superior inducements, and through the operation of these superior inducements they had secured a much greater volume of immigration than we had. I propose to examine briefly what these superior inducements are, and why it is that the United States land regulations are preferred to our own. In the first place, all unappropriated lands in the country are open to homestead and pre-emption. There is no exception to this rule. There is no certain number of sections or townships set apart for special purposes, but wherever the settler can find suitable land he can homestead and pre-empt upon it. Then, in the United States outside of the railway belt, public lands are sold at \$1.25 per acre uniformly, and in all parts of the country. While in our own case, outside of the railway belt south of the Canadian Pacific Railway, we sell our land at \$2.50 per acre, or twice the price, and north of the railway belt at \$2 per acre, or 75 cents per acre higher

than the Government of the United States charges the settler or investor. Then in the United States they adopt a very liberal provision with regard to timber culture, by which upon the planting of ten acres of timber the settler secures a grant of 160 acres of Government land, and above all other things the United States Government makes no discrimination in favor of great landed proprietors. They never adopted a policy by which land can be purchased and held by the payment of one-tenth down, nor by the operation of which colonization companies, and speculators can secure large blocks of townships and exclude the actual settler from those blocks unless the lands are purchased upon their own terms. So much for the superior inducements offered by the United States. Just so long as that country continues to offer superior inducements, just so long as the settler can secure a grant wherever he can find unappropriated land for a homestead, just so long as he can buy land at one-half the price, just so long as the Government fosters speculators and shows more regard for corporations speculating in large tracts than it does for the actual settler, just so long the United States will secure the fullest share of emigration from the old world, and will secure a larger proportion of that from the older Provinces going to the West.

SIR JOHN'S LAND POLICY CRITICIZED.

A few words with reference to the past policy pursued by the hon. gentlemen upon the Treasury benches with regard to its land regulations. One thing in reference to that policy which must strike almost every observer at a glance is its vacillating character. This in itself would have worked serious injury to the interests of the country. In July, 1879, my hon. friend the hon. the First Minister issued a set of land regulations which were to come into force on 1st August. These land regulations were allowed to remain in force for two and a-half months, at the expiration of which time the criticisms of the most powerful newspaper in this Dominion, fairly compelled the right hon. gentleman to change the features of his land regulations, and on the 14th October we had another set of regulations introduced. These regulations continued in operation until 25th May, 1881, when we had another set of regulations introduced. These regulations were allowed to remain in force seven months, and on 23rd December last another set was introduced. How long these will be allowed to remain in operation, time will show, but in the ordinary course of events, after being modified

by Orders in Council from week to week, and after existing for a few months, we shall have an entirely new set of regulations. With respect to the set of regulations of July 9th, coming into force on 1st August, 1879, by these regulations a supposed line on the Canadian Pacific Railway was laid down and five belts were laid out on each side of the line. The first belt A was five miles wide, the second fifteen miles wide, the third twenty miles wide, the fourth twenty miles wide, the fifth fifty miles wide, or in the five belts 110 miles on each side, or a tract of 220 miles on both sides of the assumed line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Homestead and pre-emption entries were not allowed at all in belt A, the first of these belts. In that respect the policy of the Government was different from that of the United States, which allowed homestead entries in all belts, whether in the railway belt or outside of it. In the second place, the Government restricted homesteads to eighty acres each, and pre-emption to eighty acres, outside of belt A. The settler would pass through the United States, where he could obtain a homestead entry of 160 acres, whereas in the North-West, where the inducements are less and the distance greater, he could only obtain one-half as large a tract as in the United States. The inducements were not very great, and settlers did not flow in very rapidly.

A COMPULSORY CHANGE OF POLICY.

The criticisms of the great journal to which I have referred, compelled the Government, in two months and a-half, to change their policy and issue a new set of regulations. Then, by the regulations adopted in this country, only eight sections in each township of thirty-six were set apart for homestead entries or pre-emption, and, in that respect, as I pointed out a few moments ago, the policy of the Government was less liberal than that of the United States, and continues to be less liberal. Then, the price charged for pre-emptions in belts B and C, under these regulations, was \$2.50 per acre, while in the United States the price charged for pre-emption entries similarly situated was \$1.25 per acre. In belt D the price was \$2 while in the United States it was \$1.25. So, wherever a comparison was instituted by the settler between the policy of the right hon. gentleman, with respect to homesteads, in size, price, or location, and that of the United States, it was unfavorable to Canada, and would be calculated to divert immigration from the North-West. In addition to this feature, the right hon. gentleman introduced another and a still more pernicious feature—

THE SYSTEM OF CREDIT SALES.

He offered land on credit, a payment of one-tenth down being required, and the balance in nine equal annual instalments. In the fifty mile belt, speculators, by paying 10 cents per acre, could secure control of the land. It was a magnificent opportunity when \$100 would secure 1,000 acres, and it was an opportunity of which speculators availed themselves with avidity. It was an opportunity which, whatever its advantages might be to speculators, was sure to work lasting injury to the country and to the interests of those who wished to till the soil. The effect of this policy, as I pointed out a few moments ago, was plainly visible in the Census returns of the two countries. The 14th of October came and we had another set of regulations, and those regulations made the terms of homesteading somewhat more liberal, very much more liberal as regards the quantity of land. They allowed the homesteader to enter for 160 acres, and allowed him to pre-empt another 160 acres. They also opened belt A to the operation of the homestead and pre-emption law, but they did not increase the area in each township allowed to be homesteaded and pre-empted, nor did they remove the discrepancy in price between the pre-emption entry in Canada and the United States; and the regulations also continued the pernicious system of credit sales, and in these three respects the position of Canada as a field for immigration was much less favorable than the United States. These regulations remained in force until the 25th of May, 1881.

THE GREAT RAILWAY SWINDLE.

In the meantime we had consummated an arrangement; a bargain which, I fear, will not cover hon. gentlemen opposite with honor, and will not, I fear, bring upon them the blessings of posterity. We had, in the meantime, made arrangements by which it became no longer necessary to hold that reserve of 100,000,000 acres of land for the purposes of the Canadian Pacific Railway. We had made an arrangement by which we gave to a company, in completed road and surveys, a sum three-fifths as great as that which they were called upon to pay for the construction of the balance of the line; by which the company were given, in cash, one-half as much as the cost of the completed line; by which they were given a grant of land worth, according to the valuation of hon. gentlemen opposite, which is three-fifths of the rate at which the Syndicate are selling lands at the present time, one and a-half times the cost of the con-

struction of the line. This favored company will receive two and a-half times the cost of constructing the line, besides the transportation monopoly and various other perquisites and privileges which made this, I was going to say, the greatest railway swindle of the age—but I will not say that—but made it a very soft thing for the gentlemen who made this bargain with the hon. gentlemen on the Treasury benches. This arrangement having been made, it became necessary, of course, to adopt

NEW REGULATIONS,

and these were passed on 25th May, 1881. By these regulations belts were laid off on each side of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and projected branches, twenty-four miles in width. In those belts alternate sections were granted to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. In the alternate sections not granted to the Railway Company, the same conditions as regards homesteads and pre-emptions, were observed as under the former regulations: 160 acres for homestead and 160 acres for pre-emption claims were allowed, and the price of the pre-emption claims in the railway belt was fixed at \$2.50 per acre, which was exactly equivalent to the price in the United States within railway belts. Outside of the railway belt eight-thirty-sixths of each township were for homesteads, and an equal quantity for pre-emption entries; and the price of the pre-emption land was \$2 per acre, or 75 cents per acre higher than the corresponding lands in the United States. Under the two preceding regulations, Sir, we had the evil of credit sales and of violation, to a great extent, I believe, of the Statute with reference to the restriction of sales to 640 acres to each individual. We had, under the restrictions of the 25th of May, 1881, a new danger. Credit sales had ceased, and I presume the sales to speculators of any amounts greater than 640 acres, have ceased; but there is a new and dangerous feature in this system, a feature characterized as colonization schemes, but a plan which should be characterized as one that facilitates the creation of great estates; a plan for

ROBBING THE POOR

for the benefit of the rich; a plan for depriving the settler of the opportunity of purchasing his land at first cost in order that speculators and landsharks might compel him to pay such a price as they might be able to squeeze from him. The chief outlines of this scheme were as follows: In the first place, it

was necessary to obtain the Government's consent to the purchase of lands without limit as to quantity. If the settler went to the Land Office to purchase one acre or a quarter-section, he would be charged the full price, but the speculator goes there and makes his bargain with the Government. He says: "I want this block of ten or fifteen or twenty townships on the terms which you have been gracious enough to accord to us, viz., at half the price you would sell it to the hardy son of toil." The company binds itself to certain conditions. If these conditions were kept, at the end of five years the sale was consummated. If these conditions were not kept, then the Government might either cancel the sale or accept payment in full of regular price without interest. There was here a two-fold opportunity for corruption. There was the opportunity, first, in the granting of these colonization limits, and, secondly, in the power the Government reserved to either cancel the sales on failure to comply with the conditions or to continue them on—two very dangerous doors we had opened for the exercise of corrupt practices. The arrangement with reference to these lands was two-fold. The first referred to lands outside the twenty-four mile belt on either side of the main line or any branch line of the Pacific Railway. Under this arrangement the odd sections, except school sections 11 and 29 in each township, were sold at \$1 an acre, there being 10,240 acres in each township. The conditions were that within three years two settlers should be placed on each odd-numbered section and two settlers on each even-numbered section. The law also permitted the colonization company to aid immigrants or settlers on homesteads to the extent of \$500 each, and take a mortgage on the homestead claim at 6 per cent. interest. This was calculated to facilitate the operation of the colonization companies in enabling them to get one-half the number of settlers required without the outlay of any money that they would not be sure to be reimbursed for. The settlers, I take it, on the even-numbered sections might be purchasers to any extent. The purchaser of a forty-acre lot would be a settler; so would the purchaser of an eighty-acre lot. They might even be tenants, as I presume a tenant on the lands would be, within the meaning of the law, a settler. Now, the result under this plan would be that the cost to the company would be at the rate of \$10,240 per township. If the colonization companies sold to thirty-two settlers eighty acres at \$2 per acre, the amount would be \$5,120, which would leave 7,120 acres in each township, costing the company \$5,120, or 72 cents per acre. Or the colonization company might sell 5,120 acres at \$2 per acre, and they would retain 5,120 acres of land free of cost, and if the land was

sold to the settler at more than \$2 per acre, as is not only highly probable but morally certain, the gains of the company would be proportionately greater. The settlers on the even sections might be tenants, and in that case the company would have 10,240 acres in each township at a cost of \$10,240. Now, under this plan No. 1 of

THIS COLONIZATION SCHEME,

the advantages were entirely in the hands of the colonization company. The Government took the public lands in these townships which it was natural to suppose the settlers of the country would ultimately want, because the scheme contemplates the introducing of settlers; but under the operations of these colonization companies the lands were taken which these settlers would ultimately want, or presumably want in a very few years, and placed in the hands of colonization companies at half price, the settler being left at the mercy of the company, who would ask and exact such prices from him as it might be able to obtain, and what the Government should have done was to have kept the land in its own hands, itself acting in the capacity of a colonization company, ready and anxious to sell the lands to actual settlers at a fair price, and allow no middlemen to intervene between itself and the ultimate cultivator of the soil. There was another plan in this colonization scheme in these regulations. Either the colonization company might buy land outside the railway belt, or, as the regulations provide, they

MIGHT TAKE FROM THE SETTLER

the lands set apart by Statute for pre-emption within the railway belt. The Government would sell to the company 5,120 acres of land in each township or eight sections that the law provided should be set apart for pre-emption, thus depriving the settler of an opportunity of pre-empting any claim whatever in blocks of townships of that character. Under this arrangement if the company within five years placed thirty-two settlers on its own lands and thirty-two settlers upon the homestead reserves, they obtained the land at \$1.25 per acre, that being one half the price within the railway belt. Here again the law permitted the company to make advances to homestead settlers of \$500 each and take mortgages on the homesteads. The possible result of this scheme might be as follows: that allowing thirty-two settlers had eighty acres each at the Government price of \$2.50 per acre, the amount would be \$6,400, the company receiving \$6,240, the sum it paid for the whole,

and retaining 2,560 acres free of cost in each township. Or if more than \$2.50 per acre were charged to the settlers, the gains of the colonization company would be proportionately greater; or the company might place tenants on this land, and might get the whole of these 5,120 acres at \$1.25 per acre, or \$6,400 for all the pre-emption lands in the township, and in case of failure to carry out the conditions, the company might pay the other half at the expiration of three years, without interest. That is, if the company failed to introduce one single homestead settler or one settler on its own lands during the term the scheme ran, then, at the expiration of that period, it would pay the full price and retain the land; and no doubt, in many cases, colonization companies would prefer to take that course. So much, Mr. Speaker, for the character of the land regulations and the land policy of my hon. friends in the past. I do not wish to deal with this matter at very great length; I merely desire to give a brief *resumé* of the course pursued by hon. gentlemen up to the time the last regulations were issued; and before entering upon the consideration of the present land regulations.

SIR JOHN'S CALCULATIONS CRITICIZED.

I wish to call the attention of my right hon. friend to some calculations—I am quite willing to believe they were not his own, although he assumed the responsibility for them—which he presented to the House two years ago, with reference to the probable amount of the future land sales and the influx of immigrants into the North-West. In the course of a speech delivered by my right hon. friend on the 5th of April, 1880, he estimated that the cost of surveys in that country for the next eleven years would be \$2,000,000, and the cost of management of the Land Department, \$400,000. Well, Sir, I find that the sum expended on surveys in 1880 and 1881 was \$477,321, and that was just the beginning of the work; the estimated expenditure for 1881-82 was \$300,000, and for 1882-83 it is \$450,000; making a total for the four years of \$1,227,000, with the certainty that this expenditure will largely increase from year to year in the future. The estimated expenditure for the management of the Land Department for 1881-82 was \$70,466, and, for 1882-83, \$99,600, making a total of \$170,000 for the two years: and I am afraid that at this rate it will largely exceed the hon. gentleman's estimate of \$400,000 for eleven years. The hon. gentleman estimated that the land sales up to 1890 would amount to \$71,000,000. This was based on the reservation of 100,000,000 acres for railway purposes. One-fourth of that quantity

has been granted to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company; and if I deduct one-fourth of one-half of the \$71,000,000 from that amount, the balance of the hon. gentleman's estimate for the period will be \$62,000,000. Well, Sir, I find from returns which I have received from the Department, that our total sales in cash and scrip, for the eleven years and a-half, from July 1st, 1872, to January 1st, 1882, amounted to \$972,835; that the amount due upon time sales on the 1st of January last was \$647,777; and that the amount due on pre-emption sales on the 1st January last was \$1,942,988; making a total in the eleven years and a-half of credit sales, pre-emption sales, cash sales, and sales for scrip, of \$3,563,600. The other calculations of the right hon. gentleman were equally widely astray. He estimates that the sales of lands for 1880, apart from homesteads and railway lands, would amount to \$1,440,000, and by a ratio of increase which he gave us, that the sales for 1881 would amount to \$1,725,000; yet we find that the sales for 1881 amounted to \$191,626. He also estimated that 3,000 homesteads would be granted each year—and he comes nearer in that estimate to the truth than in other cases, because the actual number granted last year was 1,754, a little over one-half what he estimated.

REPORT DEFICIENT IN INFORMATION.

It may be pertinent to the question at this stage to make a few remarks with regard to the report which the hon. gentleman laid on the Table a few days ago. That report is singularly deficient in statistical information; all the statistics contained in it could easily be placed on one page; but so as to pad it out and to make it a volume of the size it is—and it is a very small volume at that—field notes were thrown in extensively; nine-tenths of the report consists of surveyors' field notes. Well, they may possess considerable value, but the information given in them might be placed in a more condensed form. I would suggest to the hon. gentleman, if he will permit the suggestion, that we ought to have in this report the following information for each year since the North-West was acquired: A statement of the total number of homestead entries in each year, the total number of pre-emption entries, the receipts in detail, the number of acres surveyed, the cost of surveys, the cost of the Land Department, land offices, and various incidental expenses, the timber licenses granted and the revenue from the royalty on timber, the pasture leases granted, the colonization plans and the revenue from such, and the amounts outstanding from the sales of land. I

think if the hon. gentleman will give us a report in each year embracing the information to which I have briefly alluded, it will make the report valuable to the country and interesting to the House, and this can easily be done. It is well known to all heads of Departments that the character of our reports is such that they will admit of great improvement, and they would not then be in a condition of perfection. Now, Sir, I come to the consideration of the

PRESENT LAND REGULATIONS,

and with regard to these regulations, Mr. Speaker, we can only judge as to their character by the regulations which I hold in my hands. The right hon. gentleman informed us last night that a set of agreements had been prepared—I think he told us—which made these regulations very stringent. Well, there may be conditions in these agreements which may somewhat alter the character of the regulations, as they appear on the surface; but in the consideration of this matter, I shall be governed by the language employed in these regulations. The conditions which are set forth in these regulations, I shall assume are the conditions which are in force, whatever qualifications may be made by these papers which are to be brought down. Under these regulations, Mr. Speaker, the public lands in the North-West are divided into four classes—classes A, B, C, and D. Class A consists of the lands within twenty-four miles of the Canadian Pacific Road, or of any of its branches. Class B consists of lands within twelve miles of any projected line recognized by the Governor in Council, other than the Canadian Pacific line, or its branches. Class C consists of all lands south of the main line of the Canadian Pacific road, not embraced in classes A and B. Class D consists of all lands north of the main line of the Canadian Pacific road, not embraced in classes A and B. As before, pre-emption and homestead entries are permitted in sixteen sections out of the 36 sections in these townships; that is, eight sections are devoted to homestead entries and eight to pre-emption. The lands in class C, that is outside of the railway belt, south of the Canadian Pacific Railway, are held at \$2.50 per acre, double the price at which pre-emption entries are held in the United States where pre-emption lands of similar situation are held at \$1.25 an acre. The lands in class D are held at 75 cents an acre higher than pre-emption claims in corresponding localities in the United States, and the disparity of price in these public lands is the same. Public lands are sold to actual settlers in class C at double the price which is asked for relative situations in the United States,

and the public lands in class D are sold to actual settlers at 75 cents an acre higher than the prices of public lands in relatively the same situations in the United States. Sir, in addition to this restricted area which is set apart for homesteads and pre-emptions, we have under these regulations a rule for colonization schemes, which will give to speculators, at one-half the price, all lands that are reserved for homesteads and pre-emptions in this great region, which is embraced in Class D. By colonization plan No. 2, I repeat, that all lands in Class D, which covers more than one-half of the public domain of the North-West, may be retired from the market and placed in the hands of speculators; while homestead settlers and pre-emption settlers are excluded entirely from this vast region. And, Sir, upon the whim of the Minister, homestead lands and pre-emption lands may be withdrawn from entry and put up at auction sale, under section 2, sub-section C, of these land regulations. Now, here are two plans, by which the interests of the homestead settler and the interests of the man who wishes to make a pre-emption entry, are placed

AT THE MERCY OF ONE MAN

—at the mercy of the hon. the Minister of the Interior. The hon. the Minister of the Interior may give up the whole of that region to the operation of these pernicious colonization schemes, or he may withdraw the homestead lands and pre-emption lands in the whole of this belt D, from settlement and entry, and put these lands up for sale at auction. I hold, Sir, that the placing in the hands of any one man a power as great as this, is an act fraught with danger to the interests of this country. I hold, Sir, that no man should be invested with a power so despotic—powers that may be used to the injury of the great mass of the people of Canada in the manner in which these powers may be used; and with regard, Sir, to the authority for this scheme of colonization—the authority under which it is proposed to place millions upon millions of acres of land in the hands of speculators—the authority under which the whole of the public domain of the North-West outside of the railway belt may pass away for ever from the operations of a settlement policy conceived in the interest of the landless and those who are to become settlers—I say, Sir, the legislation upon which this vast policy rests, it seems to me is entirely insufficient. The little clause in this Bill upon which this policy is predicated, Sir, is as follows:—

“Provided that no purchase shall be permitted at a less price than \$1 an acre; provided also that except in special cases, where otherwise

ordered by the Governor in Council, no sale to one person shall exceed a section of 640 acres. Sect. 24."

Well, Sir, are these special cases? Are these the exceptional cases? Are these the insulated cases, where sales of more than 640 acres are to be permitted—cases that are to cover the whole country—cases that are to sweep away from the possession of the settler and the landless, not an isolated tract here and there, but the whole of belt D possibly, and all lands outside of the belt of the Canadian Pacific Railway. I hold that the assumption based on this little clause is a monstrous one, and that the policy of the Government in this respect is one pernicious in its character, and one not warranted by the character of the legislation which is contained in that Bill. Well, Sir, what are these plans? What are the features of this plan No. 1, and of this plan No. 2, contained in those regulations, by which

THE SETTLER MAY BE DEFRAUDED OF HIS RIGHTS;

by which corporations may be invested with dukedoms and kingdoms; and by which the manipulations and operations of speculators may be made the curse of the whole of this vast region in future years? Here is plan No. 1. I understand that it is the popular plan at present, simply because it requires a very small payment in cash, a payment of one-fifth down, and the balance to be paid in four equal annual instalments; and as it is provided that interest, at the rate of 6 per cent., is to be charged upon past due instalments, it is to be supposed that no very serious consequences will ensue if the speculators allow their payments to fall into arrear. Here is the plan—lands may be granted under this plan in belt D, and there is no restriction as to area. It may consist of lots and it may consist of townships. It is left entirely within the discretion of the hon. gentleman whether four townships, or ten, or thirty or forty townships are granted. He may, if he chooses, give to his favorites one-half of that great region, there is no restriction whatever; the grants are to be made in belt D and the price is to be \$2 an acre, and the payments, one-fifth down, or 40 cents an acre, and then the balance in equal annual instalments during four years without interest. The requirements of the scheme are as follows: the party purchasing the land is to place in each township thirty-two settlers on homesteads, and is allowed, as in previous cases, to advance \$500 to each settler and take a mortgage on his claim at 6 per cent. interest; thirty-two settlers are to be placed on Government lands, two on each section, making in all sixty-four settlers, which the company has to place

in each township, and upon which they are to receive a rebate of one-half the purchase price, or \$1 an acre, leaving the net cost of the land at \$1 an acre. The time they have to fulfil these conditions is five years, and in each year upon the placing of a settler in this township they receive a rebate of \$120. Year after year as they place settlers, they receive at the expiration of the year a rebate of \$120 for each settler. At the expiration of the time, if the full number of settlers are there, they receive the full rebate of one-half; but if the full number is not settled they receive in the same proportion as if they were. They are to receive a rebate of \$160 for each settler, but it is provided my hon. friend may say that unless they fulfill the conditions contained in this colonization plan of placing sixty-four settlers in each township their rights may be declared forfeited and the land taken from them. The right hon. the leader of the Government said, last night, however, that the forfeiture condition was of very small consequence. I presume it is. I imagine that the cases where rights of colonization companies will be declared forfeited, in consequence of their not having fulfilled the conditions of this agreement, will be exceedingly rare.

DANGER OF CORRUPT PRACTICES.

But there is a bad feature here. It strikes me it is a dangerous power to place in the hands of a Minister of the Crown, to say of a company whether their rights, involving possibly hundreds of thousands of dollars, shall be forfeited or not. It strikes me that, under such circumstances, there is a chance of introducing those influences which it was charged a few years ago, were used with Judges in the city of New York. I recollect reading of a case where a suitor, who was extremely anxious as to the result of a suit, in the course of adjudication had called upon one of the Judges. He had heard that Judges in New York were open to corrupt influences, and was a little doubtful whether in this particular case it would be safe to assume that was the case. After some conversation he said hesitatingly and fearfully: "I suppose, your Honor, it would not answer for me to make any suggestion as to compensation, or any thing of that kind in this matter?" The Judge said: "The sooner you get rid, my friend, of scruples of that character the more likely you will be to win your case in Court." There is danger in a matter of this kind when one man has power to declare whether rights will be forfeited or not, of corrupt practices being used.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I call my hon. friend's attention to sub-section B, of section 10, of the regulations:

"But if it should be found that the full number of settlers required by these regulations are not on the tract, or are not placed on in conformity with sub-section B of clause 9 of those regulations, then for each settler fewer than the required number, or not placed in conformity with the said sub-section, the party shall forfeit one hundred and sixty dollars of rebate."

Mr. CHARLTON. I am discussing, at present, the colonization plan No. 1, and I am dwelling upon section 10, sub-section C, which reads as follows:—

"If at any time during the existence of the contract the party shall have failed to perform any of the conditions thereof, the Governor in Council may cancel the sale of the land purchased by it, and deal with the party as may seem meet under the circumstances."

The hon. gentleman will recollect that last night he told us the forfeiture conditions were of very little consequence. I imagine it will be found they are of very little consequence under that sub-section which gives permissive power, and does not make it mandatory upon the Minister, I hold the door is opened for corruption, and that these regulations should say definitely what should be the duty of the Minister, and that there should be no choice in the premises left to him.

POSSIBLE PROFITS TO SPECULATORS.

Now, I come to deal with the possible results. Of course, speculators will examine carefully these regulations, and calculate what may be done under this or that condition of things, and what possible results they may be able to attain. Let us look into that question for a few moments. If sixty-four settlers are placed in each township, the company acquire their 10,240 acres of land for \$10,240. That, then, is the inducement to fulfil the condition of placing the full number of settlers there. Now, if they sell to thirty-two settlers 160 acres each, at \$2 an acre, they receive the amount of their investment, \$10,240, leaving them 5,180 acres free of cost. But if they sell to that number of settlers 80 acres each at \$2 per acre, it leaves them 7,680 acres, costing \$5,120, or 72 cents per acre. If they sell to thirty settlers 40 acres each, at the Government price of \$2, it leaves them 9,680 acres, costing \$7,680, or 85 cents an acre. If, however, they should sell, as it is highly probable they will, land at, at least, \$4 an acre—I understand the Canadian Pacific Railway is selling lands at \$5 an acre—they will have, after selling to thirty-two settlers 160 acres each, at \$4 an acre or \$20,480, will have remaining one half the lands of the Townships and \$10,140 besides. Should they sell thirty-two lots of eighty acres each at \$4 each, \$10,240, they will have remaining three quarters of the land of the township free of cost. Should they dis-

pose of thirty-two plots of forty acres each to thirty-two settlers at \$4 an acre, which will give them \$5,120, they will still have left 8,960 acres, or they will have seven-eighths of the lands at a cost of 57 cents per acre. But they may place thirty-two tenants upon their own lands, and if these are to be considered settlers, they get their 10,240 acres at \$1 an acre. These regulations provide that a company shall have the privilege of obtaining all pre-emptions in townships upon certain conditions. The homesteads settlers may, through advances or otherwise, be placed somewhat under the influence of the company, and if they fail to have their pre-emptions entered within three months of the time of their failure to secure their rights in that respect, these corporations may step in and grab every pre-emption claim in the township. It is a beautiful arrangement in the interests of the speculators. I think my hon. friend in making this arrangement must have been aided by suggestions from hon. gentlemen who well understood how to manipulate matters of these land speculations, and make a handsome investment with their money. This colonization plan No. 2 founded upon that little three line clause, in this Bill, for exceptional occasions in which sales of more than 640 acres may be made, is held to enable the right hon. Minister to take himself authority to alienate to speculators the whole of the land in belt D. By this plan all lands in townships, except those reserved for Hudson's Bay, or for school purposes, may be sold to a company. A company may buy all public lands, all homesteads, all pre-emption claims, in a township, and make a sweep of the whole thing, except four sections reserved for the Hudson's Bay Company and for school purposes, and these purchases may be made in unlimited quantities; they may extend over the whole of belt D, which embraces half of the North-West. Under that three line clause the First Minister has the power to deprive the settler, in the whole of this section, of his right to homestead and pre-emption, and to pass the whole of that vast region over to the speculators.

IT IS A MONSTROUS PLAN

and it strikes me as most singular that hon. gentlemen opposite are so unfortunate in the policy they adopt. What necessity is there for them to adopt a plan like this, which is sure to be so unpopular, which is sure to work such injury to the country, and which can do no good to themselves as a party or as individuals? Well, Sir, the company having bought the lands under this scheme at \$2 per acre, is allowed a rebate of \$120 for every settler it

places on the tract. It has a period of five years to place the settlers within these townships. At the expiration of five years, if it has placed 128 settlers in each one of these townships, where it has the whole land, homestead and pre-emption, it then has a rebate of one-half the purchase money it has paid and gets the land at the net price of \$1 per acre. But I do not notice here any stipulation as to the number of acres that each one of these settlers shall occupy. I do not notice any stipulations as to the location on which the settlers shall be placed. It does not say they shall be placed on alternate sections, that they shall have 160 acres each. They may all be placed in one corner of the township. A blacksmith may buy one acre and be counted a settler, and the laborer who goes there and cultivates two or three acres of land given to him by this monopoly is a settler. The settler who goes there and buys forty acres is a settler. They may complete the conditions of this bond; they may place there 128 settlers in each township, and these settlers may not occupy eight sections of land. These settlers may be so placed in the township as to give to the speculative company three-fourths of the land in that township in one continuous body. Well, let us see now this thing, to use a slang expression, will pan out—this rich thing; and the only reason that people are not availing themselves of this plan in preference to the other is that it requires a little larger outlay of money at the start. Under plan No. 1 the Company gets possession of the land at 20 cents an acre; under plan No. 2 at \$2 per acre. But in the event of having to deal with the settler it is a much better plan than the other. Ultimately the result will be more advantageous to the protégés of my hon. friend, the speculators.

COLONIZATION PLAN NO. 2.

Let us see how it will work. If eight sections in each township are sold to settlers in forty-acre lots, at \$2 per acre, the company receives for the sale \$10,240; it gets in rebate for the 128 settlers at the expiration of five years, \$30,480. The result is it obtains 15,360 acres for \$10,240, or 67 cents per acre; but if it sells to the 128 settlers, in eighty acre lots making sixteen Sections, at \$2 per acre, the Government price, the result is it gets from the amount of sale and the rebate, at the expiration of five years, \$40,968. It retains 10,240 acres of land, costing it nothing except the cost of surveys, 5 cents an acre. But if it sells 128 forty acre lots at \$4 per acre, which is more likely to be the case, it receives \$20,480, and retains 15,360 acres, or three-fourths of the tract free of cost. It receives in rebate and in money received for one-quarter of the

tract sold, the sum the whole tract cost. But if it sells 128 eighty-acre lots to the 128 settlers at \$4 an acre, it receives \$40,960 in money and \$20,480 in rebate for half the tract, leaving \$20,480 in cash at the expiration of five years, and 10,240 acres of land. Well, Sir, if the company sells its lands at \$2 an acre, the profits are 100 per cent; if it sells the land at \$3 per acre, the profits are 200 per cent.; if it sells at \$4 per acre, they are 300 per cent; if it sells at \$5 per acre, the profits in the transaction are 400 per cent. This matter may be arranged so as to sell half the land in each township and leave a block amounting to over 40,000 acres in one solid block taken out of a block of four townships. We were told last night by the hon. gentleman—at least I understood him to say—that the grants made already cover some 7,000,000 of acres. I understand that the applications made would cover the country twice over and would reach from the Red River to the Rocky Mountains and back again. I would like to inquire of the hon. gentleman whether he is leaving a neutral zone between the Licensed Victuallers' grant and the Temperance Colonization grant.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. For my hon. friend's occupation.

Mr. CHARLTON. Well, I am afraid there will be future difficulty.

Mr. MILLS. That is for the police to look after.

Mr. CHARLTON. Well, I am happy we have been able to learn as much as we have with regard to the amount of land granted and with regard to the number of applications. I have heard rumors floating around the Department that there were a vast number of them, heard, some days ago that over 300 had been made.

CAUTIONING THE GOVERNMENT.

I do not know, but I have been led to suspect that the hon. gentleman's supporters behind him were some of them, figuring in these transactions, and I am afraid it will give rise to reports floating around the country that political influence had been sold by gentlemen whose votes are essential to hon. gentlemen on the Treasury benches, in the promotion of this scheme. I am very much afraid of it. Of course, I would not imagine for a moment the thing was possible—I do not assert it is possible; but I am afraid the character of the hon. gentleman will suffer by the circulation of reports of that kind in the country where their probity and honor are not as well known as they are here.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Who circulates the reports? The hon. gentlemen?

Mr. CHARLTON. No; I say that I fear such reports will go into circulation and obtain credence.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Who starts the reports? Is it the hon. gentleman?

Mr. CHARLTON. I may remind the right hon. gentleman that the eyes of the whole country are upon him. The people are aware of the fact that there is a great rush of speculators to the North-West, they are aware of the fact that the supporters of the Government have already had some influence on former occasions in matters of this kind, and there is danger that these reports may obtain circulation and credence.

OBJECTIONS TO THE TWO COLONIZATION PLANS.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the objections to these two plans may be very briefly stated. Plan No. 1 deprives the settler of the chance to purchase any land except pre-emption at Government prices. It deprives the settler, I repeat, of all chance to purchase any public land at Government prices, the only lands he can purchase are pre-emptions; all the other public land in the country is granted to these companies, it passes into the hands of speculators whose interest is to obtain the utmost farthing they can, and they will do it. That is, in a word, the objection to plan No. 1, a plan conceived, not in the interest of the masses, but in the interest of the few. The objections to plan No. 2 are still more serious. It sweeps away the homesteads, it sweeps away the pre-emption claim, it sweeps away the public land, it sweeps into the remorseless maw of these colonization schemes the whole public domain. It leaves the settler no foothold, no pre-emption, no homestead, no possibility of his buying of this paternal Government, one foot of the public land at the regular Government price. As I have said before, applications cover the whole country twice over. The hon. gentleman has acknowledged that he has alienated 7,000,000 acres of the public domain for the benefit of speculators and to the injury of the people who are ultimately to fill up the land. He has been remiss in his duty. He has forgotten the millions in remembering the interest of the few who come here to seek favors from him and perhaps promise him their support. What are the consequences to follow this? The settlers are obliged to buy the lands from speculators perfectly remorseless, whose sole and only object is to make money.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Hear, hear.

Mr. CHARLTON. My hon. friend may laugh, but I do not imagine that these men are actuated by any philanthropic motives in the investments they are making. Their desire is to place money in their own pockets, and they are going to adopt the course that will best lead to that result without reference to the wishes or interests of others than themselves. Then, Sir, another objection to plan No 2, is that it offers great

FACILITIES FOR CREATING GREAT ESTATES.

estates. As I pointed out, the conditions of this land grant may be complied with, by placing 128 settlers in one corner of the township, and that secured, the company retains three-quarters of the land in the township in one body. It offers the best possible advantages for the creation of great landed estates in the North-West, and our hon. friends opposite seem to display a great degree of anxiety to create an aristocracy in this country. My hon. friend the Minister of Finance justifies his policy of taxation that builds up monopolies in this country, by broadly asserting that it is a fine thing for the country to have the wealth of the country in the hands of a few, who may live in large houses, keep fast horses, and fancy dogs, and allow the masses of the people to remain poor in order to benefit a few great men. My right hon. friend, a few nights ago, spoke of the creation of great landed estates and enormous farms as something to be desired. He said that on such farms we could have the advantage of maintaining the best kind of agricultural implements and keeping the choicest stock, that we could have the lordly owner riding in his carriage and his sons mounted on blood horses.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Who said that?

Mr. CHARLTON. My right hon. friend.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I?

Mr. CHARLTON. Yes. A few days ago.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Hear, hear.

Mr. CHARLTON. My right hon. friend, speaking of the great wheat farms in Dakota, said it would be a great blessing to have a policy that would lead to the establishment of great estates, thousands and thousands of acres farmed in one body, and thus we would have the best kind of agricultural development, and expensive, processes of enriching the soil, expensive machinery and everything of that kind. But did it ever occur to my right hon. friend that the reverse of that picture might have some attractions

to present—that the placing of thousands of freeholders on small holdings would be more conducive to national strength and national growth than the gathering together of nabobs holding great landed estates. I think it would be better for the country to adopt a policy that would foster the creation of small freeholds, rather than enormous estates such as those which plan No. 2 is calculated to create. Then, Sir, another feature I have to refer to is the remissness of the Government in posting these regulations.

VACILLATING REGULATIONS.

We have, first of all, the fitful vacillating character of these regulations, and that feature has been condemned in no uncertain tones in the west by the people who understand best the operation of this policy. The policy of my hon. friend has been condemned, and will be universally condemned in the west by the men who go there to make for themselves homes, and who seek to identify themselves and their posterity with the growth of that country. Not a man of the millions who will ultimately people that country but will curse the policy which has brought such evils. The Government has also been remiss in informing the people of the changes in their regulations, and the agents knowing nothing about them the lands are withheld for sale. What for? I understand very well the advantage to the speculator of withholding these lands from sale and tiring out the actual settler, who is without means and who cannot afford to dance attendance for weeks and months on the agents and finally leaves in disgust. But the speculator with thousands at stake can afford to wait. He can enter into collusion with the authorities to procure delay and to drive from the country those who come there to settle, and who would interfere with his speculative investments. The true policy of the Government is to discourage speculation, to wash its hands of those men who seek to control tens of thousands of acres of the public domain for their own selfish purposes, who seek to get this land into their hands that they may charge the settler vastly more than they give the Government.

THE TRUE POLICY.

The Government should allow no middlemen to come between itself and the men who are to till the soil. It should consider that domain a sacred heritage and itself the trustee charged with the management of the estate for the benefit of its wards, the people of the country. Its policy should be the greatest good to the

greatest number. It should look to the future and strive to adopt a policy that will inure to the benefit of the millions of settlers, and not to establish a system that will result in the aggregation of vast fortunes in the possession of the few. There are other bad features in the Government land policy in addition to its provisions regarding colonization. In fact, Sir, the land policy of the Government abounds in bad features. We have the pasturage lease policy, a policy by which the Government is permitted to grant leases of great tracts of land, to the extent of 100,000 acres, to their favorites. And having granted these leases the Government has the power, at the mere whim or caprice of the hon. First Minister, to give two years' notice to terminate any of these leases. It can hold the rod over the leaseholder and compel him to become its supporter, and to do many things which a free man would not do. Then, with reference to the timber berths. The Government may let them without competition to its favorites. That is a bad policy, and a policy that every man should condemn. These franchises should be put up to public competition and sold to the highest bidder. There should be no hole and corner work, no dancing attendance in small cliques at the office door of my right hon. friend, seeking the favors which it is within his power to dispense under this policy.

THE DOOR OF CORRUPTION IS OPEN WIDE,

I do not say designedly, but is opened wide by the policy of hon. gentlemen opposite. Private members may lobby for the promotion of various claims, they may sell their influence to procure grants under colonization plans No. 1 and 2; they may themselves become members of colonization companies under either plan. The result is that a corrupt influence is brought to bear upon the Government. Then, Sir, they may sell their influence again in favor of companies regarding which the Government has to decide whether to cancel their claims, they having failed to fulfil their engagement, or to make them pay and allow them to retain their lands. Here are two doors open to corruption on the part of private members, and when the door is open there will surely be some person to enter. In the nature of things wherever corruption is invited corruption will exist. Then, Sir, corrupt influences may be brought to bear upon my right hon. friend to withdraw pre-emption and homestead lands, for settlement and advertize these lands for sale at auction. I can easily conceive of circumstances in which it may be in the interest of colonization companies to make bogus returns as to the number of settlers—to report that they have 128 settlers

when they have not a dozen, or when perhaps not half of the number are actual *bona fide* settlers. Corrupt influences might be brought to bear in making false representations which would enable the company to get a rebate of \$1 per acre when they are not entitled to it. I can imagine cases where corrupt influences might be brought to bear in procuring timber licenses without having those licenses properly put up to auction. I can imagine cases where corrupt influences might be brought to bear in procuring pasture leases, and coal and mineral leases, and these corrupt practices might be engaged in by private members who might be induced to sell their influence with the Government for corrupt purposes. My heart is filled with pain when I think of the temptations that my immaculate friend the hon. the Minister of Railways may be subjected to. My heart is pained when I think of the temptations that the hon. the First Minister may be subjected to. We have a prayer which implores,

“LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.”

The Government is adopting a policy that is certain to lead them into temptation, and unless Divine strength is accorded them to deliver them from evil, they will be almost certain to fall into it. It fills my heart with pain to think that they should be subjected to such great temptations as inevitably await them under this policy. Let us see what these temptations are. Suppose the agent of a company desiring to make an agreement under colonization plan No. 1, finds that the gentlemen on the Treasury benches are not favorable to his proposition. Is there not danger that the man might be disposed to offer a consideration for the allotment of a few townships? Is there not danger that, unless the hon. gentlemen were perfectly immaculate, some hon. Minister might accept a bribe of that kind? My hon. friend tosses his head, but I can tell him that corruption has existed in Governments before to-day, that corruption will be found in Governments after to-day, and that a policy such as this is calculated to produce corruption and the people of this country will condemn this policy simply because it invites corruption. We are all human, and this policy is excessively human. This corrupt influence might also be brought to bear by the speculator in inducing the withdrawal of lands from homestead or pre-emption, and having them placed in the market at auction, thus depriving the settler of his chances of making pre-emption and homestead entries. Suppose there is a block of townships, sixteen sections in which are open to homestead and pre-emption, and speculators are desirous

that they shall be withdrawn by the hon. First Minister from actual settlement, is there no possibility of corruption? Is there not danger that a large sum might be offered for their retirement from homestead and pre-emption? There is, and it is wrong that such a power should exist with the Government. The same difficulty exists with regard to the provisions for timber leases and pasture leases. The door is open in every one of these cases, inviting the use of corrupt means for the purposes of speculators

SPECULATORS FLOCKING TO OTTAWA LIKE DOVES TO THEIR WINDOWS.

I have seen about the Departments an unusual number of strange faces this winter.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. What were you there for?

Mr. CHARLTON. I was there, from time to time vainly seeking to get a summary of the information that the hon. gentleman promised to bring down before to the House, that would enable us intelligently to discuss this question. I was there in the prosecution of my duty as the representative of a constituency, looking after the interests of my constituents, and it was then that I saw the things I am about to speak of. I did not go there looking after the interests of any colonization schemes. I did not belong to the right side. I find in the lists of stockholders of these schemes the names of many political friends of the hon. gentleman. I have seen hundreds of strange faces about the Department, men gathered together in knots and groups, and men singly. The doors of the Minister's Department have been beset, and it was difficult to obtain an interview with the Secretary, much less with the Deputy Head or the Head of the Department. I do not know what they were doing there. I did not know but that some great public exigency had called these men to Ottawa, or that they were here from some patriotic motive, or in consequence of some great public danger. The lines of Whittier were suggested to my mind:

"Wherever outraged nature asks thought or action brave,
Wherever struggles labor, wherever groans a slave,
Wherever rise the people, wherever falls the wrong,
The bounding pulse of freedom's heart finds answer in his own."

I looked at those faces to see if they would fill the Bill, and thought they were not the men whom I would credit with possessing characteristics such as those. On the contrary, they were men who were evidently intent upon securing some gain for themselves, and it became evident to

me that they were seeking favors in the way of colonization grants, and that their operations were facilitated and promoted by the regulations which my hon. friend has adopted,

WHICH PERMIT CHICANERY AND FRAUD,

and political expediency to take away from the people what is their sacred heritage. We condemn the policy of the Government because it permits these varied influences to exist. We condemn the policy of the Government because it forgets that Canada is a free democratic land ; because it favors the speculator, and seeks to give him land at half price ; because it desires to create in Canada great landed estates ; because it introduces, or seeks to introduce, the tenant system in Canada, because it would compel the *bona fide* tiller of the soil to pay vastly more for his acres than the Government receives, and because it loses sight of the future, and of the millions, and barbers priceless inheritances and issues for the advantage of camp followers and gamblers. I beg to move the following resolution :—

That Mr. Speaker do not now leave the Chair, but that it be resolved,—That the present Land Regulations provide that odd-numbered sections in the Canadian North-West, outside of the Canadian Pacific Railway Belt, shall be open to sale without conditions of settlement.

That the so-called Colonization Plan No. 1, provides that parties may purchase large tracts of land on credit at \$2 per acre, with a proviso for the rebate of one half of the price on certain conditions, thus reducing the cost to \$1 per acre ; or one half the price charged to individual settlers for their pre-emptions, or other purchases in odd sections.

That the so-called Colonization Plan No. 2 provides that parties may purchase large tracts embracing all the Government lands within their area (from which homestead and pre-emption settlers are thus to be excluded), paying \$2 per acre, without any express conditions of forfeiture in case of non-settlement, and with the additional advantage of a large rebate, amounting under certain conditions to \$1 per acre from the price, in case the purchasers choose to effect a so-called settlement within each township, but without any provision as to the acreage to be given, or the interest to be secured to each so-called settler.

That these regulations are calculated injuriously to affect the future of the country by facilitating the creation of large landed estates ; by placing extended areas of the choicest lands in the hands of speculators, who have favorable opportunities in securing them in anticipation of the settler, and who may hold them for a large advance to be paid by the ultimate settler, whereby the country will gain nothing in price, and will lose through the diminished ability of the settler to contribute to the public revenues.

That in the opinion of this House our aim should be to people the agricultural regions of the North-West with independent freeholders, each cultivating his own farm, and paying therefore no more than the public treasury receives ; and that, save in the case of town plots, or other exceptional cases, the sale of North West Agricultural lands should as a rule be made to actual settlers only, on reasonable conditions of settlement, and in quantities limited to the area which can be reasonably occupied by a settler.